

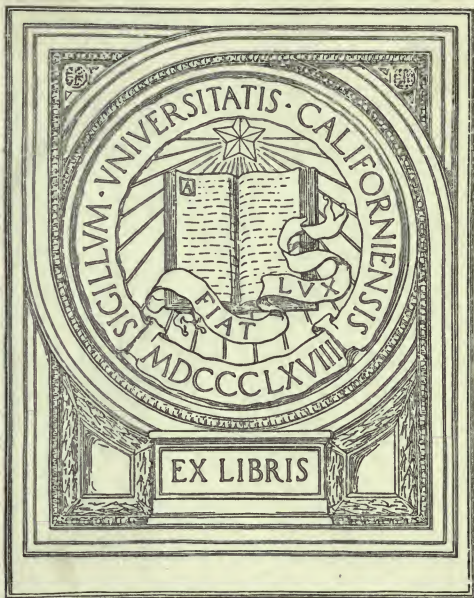
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ST. CRISPIN'S DAY;

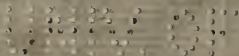
OR,

GOTHAM IN AN UPROAR!

AN

HISTORICAL BALLAD,

TO THE TUNE OF "CHEVY CHASE."



"The peasant's toe galls the courtier's heel."—*Shakespear.*

London,

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

1820.

TO VIMU
AIRBORNE

ARGUMENT.

A CERTAIN Scottish Colonel of Cavalry, quartered in Gotham, in returning from the theatre on St. Crispin's eve, *an. dom.* 1819, somewhat elevated with wine, happened to have his foot trodden on in the crowd. Supposing it was done intentionally, he laid violent hands on the ~~supposed~~ ^{imagined} offender;—a squabble ensued, and a mob collected; which shortly assumed so threatening an aspect, that it was deemed necessary to call out the yeomanry cavalry; on the approach of which, the mob burst into a scornful laugh! which so terrified the yeomanry horses, unused to war's alarms, that they instantly turned tail, and ran away with their unfortunate riders! This trifling affray was magnified by the ministerial papers into a serious insurrection of the disaffected! A certain Justice of the Peace, in

perpetual dread of a visit from the Radicals, being disturbed one night, after he had retired to rest, by a tremendous noise, alarmed his neighbours **and** armed his household, and boldly sallied forth to meet the foe—when, lo ! appeared a luckless cat, with a mouse-trap at her tail, running furiously about the yard ! which so terrified the animals within hearing—hogs, dogs, cows, calves, asses, ducks, and turkey-cocks, that their united clamour formed a din “worse than fables yet, have feigned or fear conceived !”—Still, however, the glittering of arms were discerned at a little distance ; and one of the party discharged his blunderbuss, which struck some stale herrings, hung up shining in the dark !—the shot took off the head of a man of straw, set to frighten the crows ! and, ultimately, wounded some of the Justice’s own shirts, spread on a hedge to dry ! This worthy magistrate, being on the alert to discover treasonable practices, happening to overhear a boy at play say to one of his companions, that “the cobbler’s son had just taken home some pikes,” took the alarm, **and** assembled a posse of constables, and repaired to the poor man’s house :—to his infinite consternation and dismay !—when, after a long, but unsuccessful search, some

pikes were indeed discovered,—not for sanguinary purposes,—but boiling in a pot for supper ! Another Reverend Magistrate, on hearing a report of the approach of the Radicals, hastily buried his plate and other valuables in an adjacent field ; but, in his ^{panic} ~~hurry~~, having neglected to mark the spot, the plate, &c. could never after be found ! By way of greater security, he removed the most valuable contents of his larder into the vestry of his church ;—on repairing there the following morning, to attend a parish meeting, he was beyond measure shocked and grieved to find that the church-wardens had already made free with the venison-pasty, goose-pie, &c. ; concluding they had been placed there for their refreshment !—The inhabitants of Gotham were thrown into great consternation one evening, by the bursting of a large gassometer in the neighbourhood, which they mistook for the firing of cannon !

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ST. CRISPIN'S DAY,

&c. &c.

GOD prosper long our noble king,
And yeomanry also,
Who valiantly, with sword in hand,
Do guard us from the foe !

O, Muse ! thy aid I humbly ask ;
Inspire me to pourtray,
To wrest from dull oblivion's grasp
Th' events of Crispin's Day.

O! come, in tuneful numbers shew,
 The consequences great,
 When noble heels and vulgar toes
 In contact chance to meet.

Adown the street, with heedless step,
 Two wights were wand'ring home;
 One Jack, the other Jem y'clept,
 Alike to fame unknown.

Onward they went, 'midst hundreds more,
 And little did they mind,
 Or who might chance to walk before,
 Or who to walk behind.

Fate, BLUSTERWELL did near them guide,
 To shew what man can do,
 When flush'd with wine, his heart is void
 Of fear and prudence too.

And now (for fate had order'd so),
 This noble Colonel's heel
 The pressure of Jack's vulgar toe,
 Alas! was doom'd to feel!

The Colonel, quick in angry mood,
 Wheel'd suddenly around,
 While Jack, who scarce the shock withstood,
 Fled slyly from the ground.

“Audacious wretch!” the Colonel cried;
 “You clown! confusion seize you!”
 “For what?” poor simple Jem replied;
 “What for, sir—pray and please you?”

The Colonel pleased not to explain,
 (Unconscious of mistake);
 But straight began Jem's luckless frame
 Most manfully to shake:

Whilst Jack, who knew himself the cause
 Which mov'd the Colonel's wrath,
 Irreverent, dar'd to stretch his jaws,
 And burst into a laugh!

O! lost to shame, good manners, grace,
 Of decency, all sense!
 What! laugh full in the great man's face!
 Consummate impudence!

No wonder, signs the Colonel shew'd
 Of rapid kindling ire ;
 Or that his noble visage glow'd
 Like some hot kitchen fire !

Frantic with rage, dread things he vow'd,
 By turns, bounc'd, stamp'd, and swore ;
 And much the fast increasing crowd
 His rage inflam'd the more.

“ Go, call the guard !” he madly roar'd,
 “ Go, bid the trumpet sound !
 “ The mob put straightway to the sword,
 “ Then fire the town around !”

He spake ! obedient to command,
 To horse ! the trumpets sound ;
 The guard appear'd, a chosen band,
 And rang'd the Colonel round.

To arms ! to arms ! full long and sore
 The rattling drums did beat ;
 To arms ! in haste each soldier flies,
 And scours thro' ev'ry street.

Then came the officers so bold,
 The Colonel's fate to share;
 The mob increas'd a thousand fold,
 And tumult rent the air.

It happen'd, now, a luckless Jew,*
 Who 'mongst the crowd had got,
 And having forc'd his passage thro',
 Approach'd the wrathful Scot:

When, terror-struck at sight so dread,
 He gave a fearful shout,—
 As tho' he wou'd, but could not say,—
 Pray, what's all this about?

But, BLUSTERWELL, with rage possest,
 Mistook his meaning quite;
 And thus the Jew's loud shout explain'd—
 “Who dares with me to fight?”

Proud of achieving deeds of fame,
 His glitt'ring falchion drew;
 Well pleas'd, the proffer'd combat claim'd,
 And brisk attack'd the Jew.

* An aged dwarfish old cloathsman, well known in Gotham by the name of Father Abraham.

When forth came FLASH, with martial step,
 And most intrepid air,
 And thus unto the Colonel said—
 “ Forbear, my friend, forbear ;

“ To fame already are you known,
 “ By many a matchless feat ;
 “ Say, did not you their stalls knock down,
 “ And two old women beat ?

“ And wou’d you now, in blood so base,
 “ Your valiant hands embrue ?
 “ No, no, my friend, to me give place,
 “ And I will fight the Jew.”

Meanwhile, with unabated ire,
 The Colonel’s bosom glow’d ;
 Impatient, quite, with sword and fire,
 To extirpate the crowd.

And now, on fiery steeds astride,
 A yeoman troop appear’d ;
 And much their looks their hearts belied,
 If mortal foe they fear’d !

Next came another gallant corps,
 Well train'd for fighting reckon'd;
 Who, very pious, did not swear
 Above ten oaths a second !

Burning, immortal fame to share
 With Cheshire⁹ valiant crew ;
 Panting, their sov'reign's thanks to gain,
 And rival Peterloo ! —

In haste drawn up, in dread array,
 These martial bands were seen ;
 And, mounted on a coal-black steed,
 Their captain brave, I ween ;

Eager to give the word to charge,
 He pranc'd from side to side ;
 “ And on his brow sat valour plum'd ” —
 (Ah ! woe the foe betide !)

How shall the Muse proceed ? alas !
 How dare the truth proclaim,
 How vile a trick dame Fortune play'd,
 To blast their rising fame ?

*The massacre of the people at
 Peterloo, Manchester was
 of the most atrocious acts of
 cruelty ever committed — I was
 fully proved at the trial of the
 that the plea of the military*

Brisk they advanc'd, with sword in hand,
 The mob sent forth a cry ;
 The steeds, unus'd to war's alarms,
 Turn'd tail—and quick did fly !

East, west, and south, with frightful speed,
 These luckless wights were borne ;
 Some in the mud at length were laid,
 And some in ditch forlorn !

Loud was the shout, and loud the laugh,
 That follow'd their retreat ;
 And soon the mirthful mob dispers'd,
 To boast the foe's defeat.

A calm ensu'd, the storm blown by,
 Fair peace in Gotham smil'd ;
 When soon, soon, lower'd again the sky,
 And all was uproar wild !

Rumours of plots and tumults dire,
 Fill'd ev'ry breast with fear ;
 An hundred thousand men in arms,
 Between the Tyne and Wear !

An hundred thousand men equipp'd,
 With musket, sword, and spear,
 And cannon plenty at command,
 Their foes to strike with fear !

So spake the Percy and the Bowes,*
 With looks so full of woe ;
 The panic seiz'd the public mind,
 And down the *stocks* did go !

From John O'Groat's to Lizard Point,
 These doleful tidings spread ;
 And many a knight and many a squire
 Made tremble in his bed !

Some sold their *stock*, some sold their *land*,
 Some fled in dire dismay ;
 Some of their *wits* were quite bereft,
 And rav'd the live long day !

" The mob is at our doors !" they cry,
 " And we shall all be slain !
 " ' The traitor, WOOLER's, at their head,
 " And that vile knave, MACBEAN !" †

* See the speeches of the Duke of Northumberland and the Earl of Strathmore, in the House of Peers, Dec. 13.

† A crazy old schoolmaster, well known in the north—a radical orator.

They seiz'd on pistol, sword, and gun,
 The foe to fierce assail ;
 When, lo ! appear'd a furious cat,
 With a mouse-trap at her tail !

But still were glitt'ring arms discern'd,
 Which sure the foe did mark ;
 'They bravely fir'd at herrings stale,
 Hung shining in the dark !

The shot laid low a ruffian arm'd,
 Design'd the *crows* to scare ;
 And wounded sore some *shirts* and *hose*,
 On hedge laid out to air !

With trembling hands, their silver plate
 They hid in distant ground ;
 But, failing right the spot to mark,
 The plate cou'd ne'er be found !

A justice heard of arms in cot
 Conceal'd, to cut and strike ;
 He search'd in vain, till, under cover,
 He spy'd a dish of *pike* !

The cannons roar, the hills resound,
 And hostile weapons clash ;
 These dread reports—these clanging arms,
Explosions prov'd of *gas* !

But, swift the reign of terror fled—

'Twas gross delusion all !

Encourag'd by the ruling powers,

The nation to enthrall !

To quash the spirit of reform—

~~The~~ clamour of distress—

and To keep in bondage base, the land,

And fetter freedom's press !

Corrupt that state, and sure to fall,

For safety that relies

On tempting wretched men to crime,

By plots of perjur'd spies ! *

Pining in abject want, the poor

Are easy led astray

By rascals vile, who trade in blood,

And mark them for their prey !

* This spy, this evil spirit, had been for a great length of time employed in prowling about, among the abodes of misery, "seeking whom he might devour;" and was but too successful in urging some starving mechanics to engage in his horrid plot. This man (or rather monster) proved himself well qualified for the business. The tragic drama was, in every re-

Alas ! for England's fair renown,
 Abroad such tales should go !
 That civil warfare threatens her plains,
 And fills her cup of woe !

But, see ! a noble band appears,
 Of patriots true and brave ;
 The people's cause to vindicate,
 And Britons' honor save ! *

spect, well got up, and well timed,—just at the critical moment, previous to the dissolution of Parliament.

* Riot, intemperate proceedings, and the great increase of robberies, &c. are to be deplored and reprobated ; yet, those who censure the lower orders so severely, ought to take into consideration that hundreds of thousands of the poor have, for a length of time, endured the severest privations, often amounting to absolute want, with the greatest patience and forbearance, and that numbers of wretched beings have actually perished through starvation, and committed suicide rather than break the laws ! The crimes of the poor are better known than their sufferings :—they pine, sicken, starve, and die, among themselves—but they thieve, rob, &c. among their superiors.

It appears, that out of eighty-four persons who had been rescued from a watery grave within these eighteen months, seventy-one of them *had clearly been driven to the desperate act by starvation !*

*In many houses the poor
 only receive thirteen pence
 each for week !*

The fearless foes of ruthless power,
 Who made a glorious stand ;
 Their country's laws to keep entire,
 And stay oppression's hand !

O ! long may Earl Fitzwilliam live,
 And Bedford's Duke, also ;
 Grey, Erskine, Grosvenor, Albemarle,
 And Tierney, Coke and Co. !

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